

Flight Jacket

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Harriers land on *USS Tarawa*

by Sgt. Kimberly L. Wilkie

PAO, MCAS Miramar

USS TARAWA (LHA1)—Members of Marine Attack Squadron 214 the “Black Sheep” from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., returned from a 10-day round trip from San Diego to San Francisco Friday after successfully completing carrier landing qualifications aboard the *USS Tarawa*.

This was the squadron’s first opportunity to perform carrier landings at sea since finishing up their last deployment in May.

It was also the Black Sheep’s first chance to work with the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit’s Amphibious Ready Group comprised of the newly operational *USS Tarawa*, the *USS Duluth* and the *USS Anchorage*. It also gave the crew of the *USS Tarawa* their first opportunity to work with Harriers before operational tempo begins later this year.

A primary training goal of the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing element on board the *USS Tarawa*, the only ship in the ARG that normally embarks Marine aircraft, was to enable the pilots of VMA-214 to bring their carrier landing qualifications up to date.

According to Black Sheep pi-



photo by Sgt. Kimberly L. Wilkie

Marine Attack Squadron 214 prepares to launch Harriers. The Black Sheep Squadron used a recent 10-day trip aboard the *USS Tarawa* to complete their pilot’s day carrier landing qualifications. This was the first time the crew aboard the *USS Tarawa* had launched the Harriers. The trip provided both Sailors and Marines the opportunity to become accustomed to working together with the Harriers before operational tempo begins this summer during the 13th Marine Expeditionary Units Western Pacific Deployment.

lot Capt. John N. Wilkin, “11 pilots got some valuable training time.”

The pilot experience level on this trip varies, said Wilkin. Some are fresh from school; others have not had the opportunity to qualify since the last deployment more than nine months ago. For some of the others it has been consider-

ably longer, said Wilkin.

The squadron used several stand downs during the past nine months to perform detailed checks of all the aircraft, according to Harrier detachment commanding officer Major Jim G. Derdall. The result is, “a renewed emphasis on a safe and reliable aircraft,” he added.

“Currently we’re close to fully mission capable and we have definitely seen an increase in aircraft readiness,” said VMA-214 Powerline Officer-in-Charge and Harrier pilot Capt. Daniel D. Rose. “We have older jets and remanufactured jets,” said Rose. “We are

See *USS Tarawa*, Page 11

FAA acknowledges Corps is on target

by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Several 3d Marine Aircraft Wing units were recognized by the Federal Aviation Administration during a ceremony March 31 here.

Marines from Marine Air Control Squadron 1, Marine Air Control Group 38 and 3d MAW received letters of commendation for providing essential radar equipment to the Palm Springs, Calif., airport. This equipment enabled air traffic control functions to continue.

In early January, an FAA representative contacted Maj. Gen. M.P. DeLong, commanding general, 3d MAW, because the airport’s existing radar was broken, and the airport had been unable to fix it for weeks. They needed to come up with a new radar. They sought out the Marine Corps to provide them with a mobile radar system until the airport’s radar could be restored. Since the radar had been broken, the airport was relying on a non-radar system to control air traffic. With the non-radar system, pilots used navigational aids located near or at the airport to gauge their distance and degrees from

the airport. Once they had this information, they radioed into the airport and gave the controllers the information.

There are several reasons why this type of system was inefficient. Non-radar control provides air traffic controllers with a limited view of incoming and outgoing traffic making it difficult to pinpoint exactly where all the planes are. Since there is room for error in reading navigational aids, controllers have to decrease air traffic and increase the space buffer around each aircraft. This minimizes potential accidents but it also slows down the airport. Because of the difficulties and delays, it was paramount for the airport to have an operating radar system, said Maj. Bill Nix, MACG-38 assistant operations officer.

Within a few days after the FAA requested the Marine Corps’ help, Marines were sent in. The day after their arrival, the Marines had the Air Traffic Control and Landing System fully operable. The following day it was certified by the FAA for use. Once the system was in place, the Marines shifted their focus to training the

See **Commendation**, Page 4

Marines can now personally access pay accounts

by Staff Sgt. Jason N. Mayer

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Active-duty Marines can now make routine changes to their official pay accounts through the Internet or by phone via the Employee/Member Self Service program.

The E/MSS, which is maintained by the Defense Finance Accounting Service, can be accessed through any personal computer with a compatible web browser or by touch-tone phone.

The system allows Marines to change federal tax withholding statuses and exemptions; start, stop or change allotments; change addresses; and update financial institution electronic fund transfer information. DFAS officials said the system would include even more features in the near future.

Gloria Cranford-Bates, E/MSS project officer, said the new system does not replace the old way of doing business, but was designed as an alternative to submitting requests to administrative offices and to allow military members personal access to their accounts. “The E/MSS is a secure way for customers to update payroll-related transactions at their own convenience, with minimal effort and without the delays inherent in paper-based processes,” she

said.

Before Marines can use the new system they must first have a personal identification number, which are currently being mailed to individual Marines throughout the world by DFAS. Once a Marine has a PIN, he or she can access their account through the Internet by going to www.dfas.mil and clicking on the *E/MSS link*.

They will then be prompted to enter their social security numbers followed by their temporary PIN. This will take them to a registration page, where they will be asked to provide additional security information and to select a new PIN. They will then be granted access to their account.

After accessing the system, menus will guide users through desired transactions. After a user has made changes, the system will ask them to confirm the actions and then tell them when the changes will be reflected on their pay records.

Once a PIN has been activated, it can also be used to access an account by phone through the Interactive Voice Response System. This system works in the same manner and has the same capabilities as the computer-based E/MSS, but the process takes much longer.

The IVRS can be reached by calling toll free

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Flight Jacket



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Commanding General
3d Marine Aircraft Wing

Maj. Gen. William G. Bowdon
Commander, Marine Corps
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Commander's Column



Maj. Gen. William G. Bowdon
Commander, Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area

Child abuse prevention is one of the most important campaigns conducted in the support of military families.

It is the duty of every Marine and every parent to be proactive in detecting and preventing child abuse. Additionally, every member of our community must be

vigilant and concerned about this issue.

Therefore, April 2000 is designated as Child Abuse Prevention Month at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. This designation is testament to our year-round commitment to protecting children and fostering healthy families.

Parenting in today's Marine Corps is challenging and often difficult. Frequent deployments and temporary additional duty periods cause separations that place increased stress on our families. These separations can be detrimental to children if not properly managed by the parents.

It is important that we combat child abuse by ensuring families requiring assistance are referred to, and use available services. Our mission depends on the availability of such support — our duty requires the prompt use of it when necessary.

This year's National theme is, "Keeping Children Safe at Home." We add an addendum to that theme, "and Safe in the Community." The entire MCAS Miramar com-



munity can enhance our children's safety by unhesitatingly reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

Marine Corps Community Services is a key resource for preventing and treating cases of child abuse and neglect. It is imperative all Marines and their families are fully aware of these MCCS support services.

I encourage all concerned to contact the MCCS Counseling Center at (858) 577-6585 for additional information.

Please join me in a community-wide partnership for the prevention of child abuse. I ask that we all be a part of the solution to keep our kids safe at home, and everywhere in our community.



Miramar Marines on target at Western Division Matches

by Staff Sgt. Ted L. Hansen

PAO, MCAS Miramar

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — Three Marines from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar hit the mark at the 2000 Western Division Matches held at Wilcox Range, March 10-31.

Gunnery Sgt. Buck N. Schulz, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, finished 25th in the individual pistol competition, with an aggregate score of 535, with eight bullseyes, of a possible 600.

1st Lt. Adrienne R. Dewey, H&HS, was awarded a bronze medal for her individual pistol shooting. Dewey fired a 531 with 10 bullseyes and was awarded a Secretary of the Navy M-1 Garand Trophy Rifle as the "High Tyro," in the pistol. A tyro is a first time division-level competition shooter.

Sgt. Michael A. Lawson, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing Headquarters, was also awarded a bronze medal in individual pistol competition. Lawson, who fired a 528 with seven

bullseyes, was the top overall shooter in Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area in 1997 and 1998, and gathered a first place finish at the 2000 MCA-BWA Intramural Pistol Competition held at MCAS Miramar in February.

The Marines were among more than 240 competitors, 226 were non-distinguished rifle competitors and, 227 were non-distinguished pistol competitors. Distinguished competitors who placed received a Distinguished Certificate from the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Competitors included active duty, reserve and retired Marines, and civilians.

Medals are awarded to competitors placing in the top 10 percent at division competition. Of the top finishers, one-sixth received gold medals and 10 points toward a distinguished badge in the designated weapon. The next one-third received

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photo by Staff Sgt. Ted L. Hansen

Brig. Gen. B. M. Lott, 1st Force Service Support Group commanding general, presents 1st Lt. Adrienne Dewey, community relations officer, CPAO, with the Secretary of the Navy M-1 Garand Trophy Rifle for her performance at the Western Division Matches.

Top NCOs push 'quality of life' before Congress

by Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Family housing, adequate childcare, medical care and fitness centers were among the quality of life initiatives the senior enlisted members of the armed forces want Congress to address in the fiscal year 2001 defense budget.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Robert Hall, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy James Herdt, Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Alford McMichael and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Frederick Finch testified Feb. 16 before the Military Construction Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee.

The four urged the representatives to approve Defense Secretary William S. Cohen's proposal to increase the basic allowance for housing. Cohen's proposal would eliminate out-of-pocket expenses for off-base housing by fiscal year 2005.

The enlisted leaders spoke of operational tempo effects on their service members. "[Last year] the pace at which we used land forces and soldiers reflected an increasing optempo for active and reserve units and proved higher than imagined," Hall said. "Meanwhile, at their home stations, commanders were using funds allocated for training to address underfunding of our installations and quality of life programs that take care of our soldiers and families."

Hall told the representatives that during the Cold War, the Army responded to a small-scale deployment once every four years. "Now it is once every 14 weeks," he said.

"Our nation owes its soldiers a quality of life commensurate with that of the private sector and the peace of mind that their families will be taken care of when they deploy," Hall said.

All of the senior NCOs said Congress has helped ease some problems by approv-

ing the fiscal year 2000 pay raise, pay table reform and retirement reform. Now they want Congress to address problems associated with substandard housing and military medical care. Hall said soldiers deserve decent living conditions. "Soldiers do not expect to live in luxury, but they do deserve access to housing for their families that will give them peace of mind while they are at work, home or deployed," he said.

He asked Congress to continue the military housing privatization plan. He said the plan could eliminate much of the military's substandard housing. He pointed to a massive Army privatization effort at Fort Carson, Colo., and said the Army expects to launch similar efforts in Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Meade, Md.

He said the committee should also consider the quality of life of unmarried soldiers.

See Quality of Life, Page 9

Patch may deliver nutrients to future warfighters

by Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — United States combat troops may get part of their daily diet through their arms if a new concept works out.

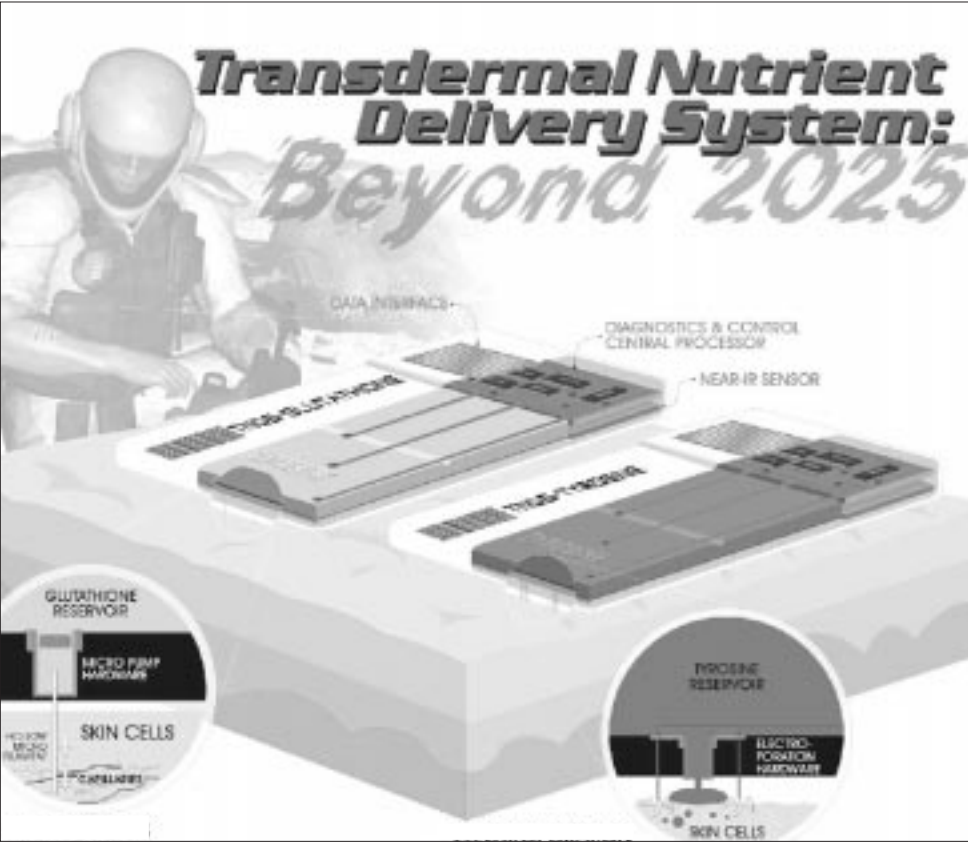
Army Soldier Center researchers in Natick, Mass., are working on a transdermal nutrient delivery system — a skin patch similar in concept to nicotine and motion sickness patches. The new system could be a part of every combat service member’s kit by 2025.

Gerald Darsch, joint project director for the DoD Combat Feeding Program at Natick, said the current developmental version is about the size of a conventional adhesive bandage and three to four times thicker. The final version will be encased in some polymer to be very flexible, he speculated.

“Service members probably won’t even notice they have it on,” he noted.

The patches would contain “micronutrient” reservoirs and microscopic “pumps” and “plumbing.” The nutrients would augment or supplement a warfighter’s diet during periods of high-intensity conflict. Officials see a use for the system to combat cold weather and high-altitude stress, for instance.

“The idea is to keep the warfighter’s cognitive and physical performance sharpened at the optimal level,” Darsch said. “It could mean fewer dead or wounded U.S. service members.”



Courtesy of American Fprces Press Service

An artist’s concept of how the transdermal nutrient delivery system would work. A sensor and micropumps in the adhesive patch would deliver nutrient chemicals that could help wearers wether the effects of cold, high altitude, muscle fatigue and other stress.

Darsch said the system could incorporate various micronutrients. Researchers, he said, are considering 65 to 70 chemicals that might be effective and safe. Two candidates, for example, are tyrsonsone, which has been proven

to help combat cold and high altitude stress, and glutathione, which could help reduce muscle fatigue and increase the ability of the liver and kidneys to filter out metabolic wastes. “We have identified some that might

be beneficial, but there still needs to be a lot of research done. What are the doses that we should administer? What are the lasting effects?” he asked. “We need to be sure before we start giving these to warfighters.” The system would dispense micronutrients when a self- contained near-infrared sensor determines the wearer needs them. The chemicals would be absorbed by osmosis through the skin.

Even using the transdermal patch, though, service members will still be hungry because the patches won’t replace food. “You can still eat even with the transdermal system,” Darsch said. “Am I going to tell you that a Milky Way or a Snickers bar still won’t find its way into the rucksack of a soldier? Our service members are pretty bright. They’ll take whatever pogeey bait is necessary.”

Darsch said researchers could probably add an appetite suppressant or something that will make the hypothalamus think the stomach is full. “We probably could do that, but would we want to? I’m not sure,” he said.

Darsch said some outside agencies are interested in the concept. “We need to get industry and academia together with us on this,” he said. “Firefighters, police, mountain rescue people, all could benefit from this concept.” He said the Army has spent just “thousands” on the concept. If accepted, he thinks a “50 percent solution” to the engineering of the transdermal patch system is possible by 2010.

Briefly

Gonzales Hall serves special meal

A special meal will be served in observance of the Easter, April 23, at Gonzales Hall from 3 to 5 p.m. (the new dining facility). Family members and civilian employees are welcomed. The meal will cost \$4.10 for people without meal cards. For family members of corporals and below, the meal will cost \$3.35. For more information, call Master Sgt. Sprawling at 577-1380. The menu is as follows:

<i>Steamship round of beef</i>	<i>Dinner Rolls</i>
<i>Mashed Potatoes</i>	<i>Baked Ham</i>
<i>Broccoli</i>	<i>Glazed Sweet Potatoes</i>
<i>Scalloped Corn</i>	<i>Cheese Sauce</i>
<i>Make your own salad</i>	<i>Colored Easter Eggs</i>
<i>Cottage Cheese with peaches</i>	<i>German Coleslaw</i>
<i>Jellied Perfection Salad</i>	<i>Tomato Juice Cocktail</i>
<i>Country Style Tomato Salad</i>	<i>Spice Cake</i>
<i>French Creme Frosting</i>	<i>Chocolate Creme Pie</i>
<i>Whipped Topping</i>	<i>Oatmeal Cookies</i>

Parking lot closed for repair

The parking lot located east of Hangar 3 (Building 9500) will be closed for resurfacing until April 14. Any vehicle parked in this area is subject to towing by the Provost Marshal’s Office. For more information, call the Public Works Department at 577-6621.

Testing schedule announced

The Education Center has adjusted its schedule to allow for unit testing on Thursday mornings. Certain criteria must be met before taking each test. For more information or to schedule unit testing, call Mr. Chuck Banks at 577-1895.

Instructors needed

Various high schools throughout the Midwest are in need of Senior Marine Instructors and Marine Instructors for their Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs.

Any Marine officer or staff noncommissioned officer who is preparing to retire this year may apply. The following high schools are hiring:

- Davenport High School, Davenport, Iowa
 - Lincoln High School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
 - Nobile Street Charter, Chicago, Illinois
 - Forsyth High School, Forsyth, Missouri
 - Washington High School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
 - Southside High School, Muncie, Indiana
 - Mountain Grove High School, Mountain Grove, Missouri
- For more information, e-mail Cpl. Prater at Praterap@9mcd.usmc.mil.

Impounded vehicles

The military police are curently holding several unclaimed vehicles in the PMO impound lot. These vehicles have been impounded for various violations and have been retained for the required period of time. If you are the registered owner of one of the below listed impounded vehicles, contact the Impound NCO at 577-1461 or 577-1462. If left unclaimed, the vehicles will be disposed of in accordance with current directives.

<i>Impounded Vehicles</i>	<i>License Plate</i>	<i>Location where impounded</i>
1994 Red Honda CRX	KA: Temp	Parking lot adjacent to Barracks 5113
1991 Blue Dodge Stealth	CA:3PBV437	Parking lot adjacent to Barracks 5302
1976 Primer Chevorlet Nova	CA:014RUJ	Parking lot adjacent to Barracks 8697
1985 Red Ford Escort	CA:2UFX981	Parking lot adjacent to Barracks 8698
1967 Black Datsun	OR:VAX909	Parking lot adjacent to Barracks 5532
1975 White/Red/Blue Suzuki motorcycle	CA:7X8561	Parking lot adjacent to Barracks 5416
Unknown Black Kawasaki motorcycle	none	Parking lot adjacent to Barracks 5711
Unknown Red Honda dirtbike	none	Parking lot adjacent to Barracks 8698
Unknown Yellow Yamaha dirtbike	none	Parking lot adjacent to Billeting
Unknown White Unknown make Jet ski	none	Parking lot adjacent to Billeting

MAG-16

- MALS-16 “Forerunners”:** The squadron is supporting the Weapons Tactics Instructors course and Combat Arms Exercises 5 and 6 this month.
- HMH-466 “Wolf Pack”:** The squadron is scheduled to conduct a pre-Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Survey this month.
- HMM-165 “White Knights”:** The squadron is scheduled to deploy to Naval Air Station, Fallon, Nev., to conduct training exercises.
- HMM-166 “Sea Elk”:** The Sea Elk remain aboard *USS Bon Homme Richard* as part of their six-month Western Pacific deployment.
- HMH-462 “Heavy Haulers”:** The Heavy Haulers continue their deployment in Okinawa, Japan, as part of the Unit Deployment Program.

MACG-38

- MWCS-38:** Alpha Company is currently deployed to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., in support of Weapons Tactics Instructors course 2-00. They are scheduled to return April 20. April 27, Alpha Company will be treated to a day of fun at Anaheim’s Medieval Times Theatrical Restaurant as a well-deserved after-deployment event. Elements from Bravo Company are currently deployed to Twentynine Palms for Limited Objective Experiment 6, Desert Scimitar and Combat Arms Exercise 5 and 6. They are not scheduled to return until the completion of CAX-6, May 13.
- MTACS-38:** Currently 48 Marines with the squadron are in MCAS Yuma, Ariz., supporting the Weapons Tactics Instructors course. Marines with the squadron are also deployed to Twentynine Palms, Calif., taking part in Combat Arms Exercises 5 and 6. The squadron is also preparing for the retirement of Gunnery Sgt. David J. Furtado, Headquarters and Service Company, company first sergeant, at the end of this month.
- MACS-1:** A large part of the squadron is currently preparing to return to Miramar from the Weapons Tactics Instructors course in Yuma, Ariz. The squadron continues to support Patriot missile testing in White Sands, New Mexico along with the Army. The remainder of the squadron is conducting clean-ups and maintenance here.
- MASS-3:** The squadron continues to support the Weapons Tactics Instructors course in Yuma, Ariz., and Combat Arms Exercises 5 and 6 in Twentynine Palms, Calif.
- 3d LAAD:** The battalion has a battery deployed to Yuma, Ariz., in support of the Weapons Tactics Instructors course. They are scheduled to return April 19. A platoon with the battalion is currently deployed to Twentynine Palms, Calif., supporting Combat Arms Exercise 5. Upon their return, the entire battery will deploy to Twentynine Palms in support of CAX-6. Afterwards part of the battalion is scheduled to deploy to El Paso, Texas to conduct cruise missile testing.

Commendation, continued from page 1

FAA employees to operate the system, which was accomplished within a week. During the two months they were there, the Marines supported more than 10,000

aircraft in roughly 500 hours. “I think it’s great we could do this. It shows the esprit de corps between federal agencies,” said Nix.



photo by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

Maj. Gen. M.P. DeLong, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing commanding general, watches as William Withycombe, the Regional Administrator for the Western Region for the FAA, presents a letter of commendation to Capt. Walter Skrzynski, Marine Air Traffic Control Detachment Delta commander. The detachment was one of several units recognized for their assistance at a Palms Springs, Calif., airport. Each of the Marines involved were given individual letters during a ceremony March 31.

MAG-11

- MALS-11 “Devilfish”:** The logistics squadron is currently supporting Combat Arms exercises 5 and 6 in Twentynine Palms, Calif. They are also providing support to the Weapons Tactics Instructors course in Yuma, Ariz. A large detachment is deployed to Kuwait in participation with Operation Southern Watch.
- VMFA-232 “Red Devils”:** This is a busy month for ’232. They’ll be conducting training work-ups all month. On April 20 the squadron will conduct a change of command. Later in the month, they’ll conduct Operation Pause, an administrative training operation.
- VMFA-323 “Death Rattlers”:** The squadron continues to support the Weapons Tactics Instructors course in Yuma, Ariz. Also a detachment of ’323 Marines is scheduled to deploy to Luke Air Force Base, Phoenix, Ariz., to conduct unit level training.
- VMFAT-121 “Green Knights”:** The Green Knights are currently deployed to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates as part of Operation Southern Watch.
- VMFA-225 “The Vikings”:** The squadron is currently deployed to Iwakuni, Japan.
- VMFA-314 “Black Knights”:** The Black Knights remain deployed aboard the *USS John C. Stennis* as part of a six-month Western Pacific deployment.

MWSS-373

- MWSS-373:** The squadron supported the American Crown Circus Tuesday. Saturday, the squadron will support the Spring Carnival here. The squadron is also helping out Marine Aircraft Group 11 by installing hand rails for them at the MAG-11 headquarters. To wrap the month up, ’373 continues to provide support to the electricians in the construction of the Lifelong Learning Center.

Sergeant Major’s Corner

courtesy of
Sgt. Maj. Robert W. Holub

Marine Forces Pacific Sergeant Major

When a man and a woman decide to become parents, they make a life-long commitment to raise and care for the child they create. Being in the Marine Corps or Navy and making that decision bring additional stresses and responsibilities that our civilian counterparts do not have to deal with. Unaccompanied sets of orders, being far from home and away from family, going to the field, and just the everyday stress of being in the Naval Service can become unbearable.

In a perfect world, the decision to have a child is a well-thought one. Both parents know what they are getting into and make sure they are emotionally and financially ready for this commitment. Like I said, in a perfect world, everything would be done right.

In the real world, however, that is not always the case.

For some Marines and Sailors, both men and women being sexually active both in and outside the bonds of marriage sometimes result in pregnancies that were unexpected. And to be quite frank with you, often times neither parent has the maturity to deal with an unplanned pregnancy.

Recently in the Force, we have had several incidents where the parents of children failed to live up to those responsibilities and some very disturbing results have occurred that deal with child abuse. That is what I would like to talk to you about this week.

When I was the Sergeant Major of the 1st Marine Corps District in Garden City, N.Y., an enlisted member of the command was turned in to the state Child Protective Agency for allowing his children to

go to school without proper clothing and for several other allegations of child neglect. I remember very clearly how defensive the father (who was the active duty spouse) was when I called him into my office to ask him about the report.

Believe me when I tell you he had an excuse for every allegation that the city caseworker was making against him and his wife over the lack of care for his kids. “Oh you know how kids are Sergeant Major. Sometimes they run out the house and forget their jackets. That is not a crime is it?”

Or, “The kids were in such a hurry they forgot their lunch because they got up late. That doesn’t make me a bad parent, does it?”

“You know how all these do-gooders are? They are always looking for a reason to trump up some charges against parents.” These are but a small sample of the things he said to me that morning. All, or at least some of his explanations, made at least some sense when you think about your own kids and the trials and tribulations you face in raising a family. But something, and I don’t know what, just did not sit right with me that morning.

Something about the demeanor of his voice and the look on his face as we spoke made the hair on the back of my neck stand up and told me there was something wrong here. There were some reports of heavy alcohol use in his house by both him and his wife and several reports of suspicious bruises on the children that could not be explained away.

I myself had seen the parents pretty intoxicated on several occasions at unit functions and several staff noncommissioned officers and officers witnessed

See **Sgt. Maj. Corner**, Page 10

Corps



Briefs

Information technology revolutionizes admin tasks

by Cpl. David H. Coe

PAO, MCAS Cherry Point

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CHERRY POINT, N.C. — One of the biggest changes within the business world during the past few years is the expansion and implementation of Information Technology. Its advances have allowed companies to consolidate work sections, communicate with customers more efficiently, and reduce cer-

tain repetitious areas of day-to-day operations.

As 2000 begins, the Marine Corps is well on the way to doing the same with its current administrative system. In 1997, the Commandant of the Marine Corps concluded that more than 1,000 Marine Corps administration billets could be eliminated. This decision prompted the creation of the Total Force Administration System, an initiative designed to modernize the Corps' adminis-

tration to meet the requirements of the 21st century, according to Lt. Col. Jeffery Peterson, TFAS branch head. TFAS plans include making it possible for individual Marines to access all of their pay and personal information through telephone and web-based applications, and even make changes to some of that data.

"One intent behind this system is to enable the individual Marine to take care of certain personal administrative duties that are considered to be within current admin boundaries," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Steven W. Wallace, TFAS East Coast representative.

Plans also include streamlining information collection and reporting for the small unit leader. This will allow commanders to use personal electronic devices to collect and report information directly into the system without the need for an administrator.

"We will create a 21st century system where forms auto-populate off existing information and automatically generate updates to the Marine Corps Total Force System when you change information. With those changes, we expect the number of administrators at the battalion and squadron levels to be reduced. These commands will still keep a small cell of clerks, supported by regional Personal Admin Centers to assist with more technical processes," said Peterson.

"The PAC's primary function will be to provide technical expertise in transaction reporting above the traditional command level," explained Chief Warrant Officer 4 Tony Torresramos, TFAS operations officer.

TFAS plans are also aimed at reducing the mystery surrounding pay and personnel administration. "One of the main points we want to get across is that TFAS will give Marines and small unit leaders an opportunity to access information they don't have access to today," added Torresramos. "TFAS will present information to Marines and their commanders in easily understandable language, not in computer code." A key part of TFAS planning is telecommunications security and access. The system will incorporate state-of-the-art security measures, a must as the Corps makes pay and personnel information available to a wider base of users.

"We will build a system compatible with our current telecommunications capacity and ensure it will take full advantage of the future expansion," added Peterson.

"What TFAS really means for the Marine Corps is that commanders will have increased access to information and an enhanced ability to do those things inherent to being a CO, namely, taking care of Marines," said Torresramos.

For more information on TFAS, visit the Headquarters Marine Corps Manpower website at <http://tripoli.manpower.usmc.mil>.



photo by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

Lance Cpl. Phong Lee, Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron G-6 Ground Electronic Maintenance Division, air traffic control communications technician, receives his acceptance letter for admission into the U. S. Naval Academy from Lt. Col. J. G. Lucas, H & HS commanding officer.

Wives show husbands how it's done



Stories and photos by
Lance Cpl. Kristopher S. Haloj

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Havy Marine Corps Helicopter Squadron 466 hosted their very first Jane Wayne Day here March 31.

This eventful day was brought about to give the wives of 466 Marines the opportunity to experience what it is like to be a Marine first hand in order to help them understand just what it is their husbands do every day.

For the more than 20 wives who participated in the event, the day began at 8:30 a.m. in Hangar 4, home to the Wolf Pack, where they piled in a bus and headed for the flight simulator. There, they were given the opportunity to feel what it's like to pilot a CH-53. They were also given the chance to experience night vision goggles first hand.

"I thought it was neat. I got in and kind-of tested it out, to see what the limitations were. Flying was much easier than I expected. I really liked the fact that you can read what elevations you're at," Lori M. Brown, wife of Cpl. Jeffery A. Glover, said.

Brown said it was easy to remember how to operate the CH-53, but she didn't even know where to begin with the instrument panel.

The night-vision goggles made for a fun time for the wives.

"I found them interesting. You can see so much, the only limit was the lack of peripheral vision. I've actually worn them before. They're neat," Paula B. Lamigo, wife

of Capt. Dwaine D. Lamigo, said.

After these motivators were finished chopping through the not-so friendly skies, they loaded back into the bus and departed for Camp Pendleton. The first stop at Camp Pendleton was the Marine Air Ground Task Force demonstration. An unexpected "small pond" blocked the bus from continuing up a dirt road that lead to the area where they were scheduled to observe a MAGTF demonstration.

In order to be at the appointed place, the wives had to take on a whopping mile hump in the blazing sun. The MAGTF expeditiously secured a landing zone and then transported troops and equipment to and from that zone.

A little nervous and excited, and possibly a little queezy from a tasty Meal Ready to Eat lunch, the wives moved onto the final event for the day, the rifle range. At the range the wives found out what it's like to fire the M-16/A2 and the infamous .50 caliber machine gun.

Ben J. Harrower, friend of 1st Lt. Dana R. Brown, tagged along for the fun.

"It's a great opportunity. I'll probably never get the chance to fire an M-16 or a .50 cal. again in my life. It was awesome," Harrower said.

By the end of the day the wives about had their fill of being a Marine. They were ready to go home after a day of fun and excitement, but with a new appreciation for what their husbands do. With any luck the event will become annual, so the wives who missed this year's Jane Wayne Day will get another chance to attend.



(Far left) Linda B. Richardson, fiancée of Staff Sgt. James Davis, takes a crack at firing the M-250 .50-caliber machine gun at Range 227 in Camp Pendleton during Heavy Marine Corps Helicopter Squadron 466's Jayne Wayne Day, March 31. (Left) Lori M. Brown, wife of Cpl. Jeffery A. Glover, Checks out a Light Armored Vehicle with a little help from 1st LAV Marines, who helped support HMM-466 by educating the wives on the LAV. (Bottom left) Denee J. Stockman, wife of Lance Cpl. Audrey S. Stockman, gets a hand adjusting her Kevlar before firing the infamous M-250 .50-caliber machine gun.



Can you drink too much water?

by Sgt. Kimberly L. Wilkie

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Any Marine who endured the rigors of boot camp, in the summer especially, must remember the importance the drill instructors placed on the consumption of 12 to 14 canteens of water a day to prevent heat casualties.

For some service members this may be the preventive measure that may necessitate a cure.

According to two recent articles in “The Marine Corps Times,” Lance Cpl. Guiseppe Leto, a 21 year-old Marine reservist, collapsed near the end of an eight-mile training hike. He was wearing camouflaged utilities (cammies), a Kevlar helmet, a load-bearing vest, an M-203 grenade launcher and a pack with a flak jacket strapped on top. He was known to drink plenty of water, noted in fact as, setting an example to his peers in his hydration efforts.

Additionally, Airman Micah Schindler collapsed near the end of a nearly six-mile Air Force basic-training march, during which he was witnessed consuming literally gallons of water.

The untimely deaths of Leto and Schindler may be related to a condition becoming increasingly common among novice endurance athletes: Hyponatremia. The condition is an electrolyte disorder. The imbalance is caused by loss of sodium in the blood from perspiration and over-dilution

with water.

The milder symptoms of hyponatremia; nausea, fatigue, weakness and confusion were witnessed in both service members during the hikes.

Schindler was observed displaying some of the onset psychiatric signs of bizarre behavior, and delirium. A post-mortem exam revealed a swollen brain dying from a lack of oxygen and blood. Leto was observed only after he had reached the most severe stages; coma and death.

While both had confirmed pre-existing medical conditions, both died under similar circumstances.

Consuming only water for hydration in large quantities, as much as four gallons in the case of Schindler, and engaging in high intensity physical activity for a duration longer than two hours, up to three hours in the case of Leto, can be dangerous. The symptoms observed under these conditions are typical to reach the final phases of hyponatremic encephalopathy, as written by Bernardo Boaventura Liberato for the paper “Nephrology” posted on the “Medstudents Homepage.”

According to a recent article in the San Diego Union Tribune, Dr. Doug Hiller, monitoring athletes at the Ironman Triathlon in Hawaii, has found that about 30 percent of finishers are both hyponatremic and dehydrated.

See **Water**, Page 9

Get the low down on healthy microwave cooking

by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

PAO, MCAS Miramar

In 1940, a device called the “magnetron” was invented to shoot microwaves off Hitler’s armored vehicles to detect their presence. However, the outcome of this invention turned out rather differently than expected. Today, most homes in America have a magnetron in them, a device commonly known as the “microwave.”

The first home microwave came out in 1952 and was sold for \$1,295. The first model was not nearly as small or affordable as today’s model. However, because of the affordability and convenience of today’s microwave, it has grown to be one of the more popular household appliances.

Another reason the microwave has remained popular is its time-effectiveness in cooking or reheating food. There are several reasons why a Marine would find a microwave useful. A Marine might not have time to cook an actual meal or might not have a stove at home.

However, using a microwave to cook food does not mean a Marine has to compromise eating healthy. Many healthy, complex meals can be cooked in a microwave.

Miramar’s Fitness Center coordinators taught a class on how to make quick and healthy microwave meals. Marines who were unable to attend this class can find any number of recipes specific to the microwave on the internet.

Topics ranged from types of containers

to cook with to cooking tips. One of the fundamentals stressed was familiarization with how a Marine’s microwave works, said Christine Higgins, Miramar Barn manager. She explained that because each microwave cooks at a different level, it takes different amounts of time to cook food. Just because the bag of popcorn says it takes three minutes to cook in one microwave it may take less or more time to cook in another microwave.

Another important tip from Higgins is not to cook food covered in syran wrap because the chemicals in the plastic can release carcinogens, which is believed to cause cancer.

Aside from giving the cooking tips, Higgins and Julie Carlson, a fitness coordinator, cooked several microwave meals, which were sampled by Marines throughout the class. A few Marines voiced their surprise that the food tastes just as good as food cooked on a stove.

One Marine commented on the scrambled eggs. “I didn’t know you could make scrambled eggs so well,” said Lance Cpl. Lorenzo Villarreal, a MALS-16 Avionics technician.

Because food doesn’t cook evenly in a microwave, it’s not uncommon for parts of food to be hot in the middle and uncooked on the outside. To prevent this, Marines can cut the food into small pieces and stir it frequently.

See **Microwave**, Page 9

Muscle recovery supplements a consideration at Parris Island

by Sgt. Dan Bigelow

PAO, MCRD Parris Island

Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C. — With all eyes turned toward reducing attrition from recruit training, Marines and Sailors at Parris Island have considered implementing nutritional supplements into the training regime.

Depot officials recently looked into the possibility of using a muscle recovery supplement marketed by Pharmavite, a pharmaceutical company located in California, to help increase muscle recoverability and reduce the possibility of injury.

Not only would this help recruits in training, but it would also assist permanent personnel who maintain a heavy daily exercise routine.

“While exercising, the body’s protein and amino acids, which are used in muscle recovery, become amazingly lower,” said Dr. Paul Flakoll, Associate Professor of Surgery and Biochemistry at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center. “Post exercise consumption of (the supplements) containing high-quality protein will interact with nutrient homeostasis, accelerate replenishment of muscle nutrient stores and enhance muscle recovery after exercise.”

Two years ago, Flakoll conducted a study focusing on the protein supplement. He found that when used within the first 30 minutes after exercising, the product, which is the only muscle recovery supplement currently on the retail market, increased protein synthesis and deposition.

“What this means is if you use (the supplements) immediately after exercising, the muscles recover faster with less pain the following day. You improve muscle protein homeostasis and recovery,” Flakoll explained. “With that, you enhance subsequent exercise performance, elevate the intensity level in subsequent workouts and improve the rate of conditioning.” Jack Kavulich, vice-president of Consumer Education for Pharmavite, feels adding supplements to the regime would provide the Corps with “the most physically fit Marines possible.”

“Optimal nutrition for Marines during exercise training will result in more intense workouts and reduce the time (recruits) spend in the Physical Conditioning Platoon,” he said during a round table discussion with

Depot officials March 2.

“It would diminish drop out rates, result in faster conditioning and you’ll have less conditioning-related injuries.”

During the discussion, Kavulich offered a program in which recruits would receive the muscle-recovery supplement immediately following physical training. They would also receive a nutritional value class to stress the importance of good nutrition.

Kavulich cited several world-class athletes who use the supplements to improve their performance. These include Iron Man Triathlon champions Peter Reid and Lorie Bowden, Steve Scott, who holds the U.S. mile record, and Steve Tilford, 1999 World Masters Mountain Bike Champion.

Should the Marine Corps decide to add the supplement to their recruit training, it could tend to be costly. Using Pharmavite’s product could take nearly \$1.5 million of the Depot’s annual budget. However, according to Depot officials, the use of a muscle recovery supplement is a consideration that warrants further study.

“We are interested in anything that will reduce attrition in training and allow recruits to perform at their maximum in physical training and other strenuous requirements,” said Col. Robert Hayes, Depot assistant chief of staff, Operations and Training.

Hayes said the Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Stephen A. Cheney, directed his staff to investigate the product further before initiating a test of the product.

“We still have a lot to do before we decide to test the product,” said Cmdr. Scott Flinn, Director of Sports Medicine at Parris Island’s Branch Medical Clinic. “We need to consider convenience, costs, things of that nature before we actually try this in recruit training. It is important though to maintain a good diet while exercising like this. A well balanced meal is always available here and will help those in training with or without the supplements.”

It has not been determined how or when the product will be tested; however officials speculate it may be used in the Special Training Company with recruits currently in the physical conditioning platoon and the medical rehabilitation platoon. It may also be tested within a training company with one series using the product and the other series serving as the control group, Hayes said.

drinks is to enhance water absorption and retention while exercising under strenuous conditions, according to an article, *Fluid tips for active people*, written by Nancy Clark, a registered dietitian with a master’s degree in science and a nutritionist at Sports Medicine Brookline. She also writes that athletes should experiment with several sports drinks to learn which brand agrees with the stomach.

Microwave, continued from page 8

“When heating large quantities of food it is more effective to divide it into smaller portions than to heat a large amount for longer,” according to the Food Science Web site www.dfst.csiro.au/microwave1.

Not only will stirring food ensure it is cooked evenly, but it will kill microorganisms like salmonella, which live in certain raw meats, according to the Web site.

Marines can expect to see similar classes offered in the future, said Higgins.

For more information on future classes, call 577-1702.

Quality of Life, continued from page 2

“Our single soldiers are living in barracks 30 to 40 years old,” Hall said. “These barracks were designed for the austere standards of a conscript army and now need to be modernized.” He said raising barracks living standards is the “highest facilities” priority for fiscal 2001.

Hall said TRICARE needs serious work. “The bottom line is that our service members and their families must be able to count on their health care system,” he said. “Our soldiers ... need to know that their families are being taken care of when they deploy.

“Some declare TRICARE a success because of the rapid start-up for its 8.2 million beneficiaries across 13 Department of Defense regions employing seven different private health care contractors,” he continued. “I’m not convinced.

“Visible and corrosive problems detract from the successes, most notably the delay in health care claims payment to private doctors and hospitals; low reimbursement rates; the lockout of elderly, Medicare-eligible retirees; and health care problems for soldiers and families in remote sites with few community health care assets.”

Navy’s Herdt said that while sailors are used to deployments, improving their lives ashore is a priority. “Sailors don’t complain about deployments nor do they complain that they live in Navy-unique living conditions aboard their ships, in berthing areas that sleep 50 to 250 sailors,” he said. “Neither do they complain of average workdays of 14 to 16 hours while at sea seven days per week.”

But in port their living conditions need to be improved, he said. “Our solution for improving housing for sailors and their families should be a three-pronged approach: funding basic allowance for housing at 100 percent, sustaining traditional military construction housing projects, and continued public-private venture support.”

Herdt said the 100 percent basic housing allowance would relieve some of the stress on base housing by making off-base housing more desirable. He said Navy public-private military housing projects are under way in South Texas and in Washington state and called them crucial to the Navy because so many bases are located in high-cost areas.

Herdt said the plight of single sailors deserves Congress’ attention. “The Navy is looking at ways to address one of the most pressing quality of life challenges, that of enlisted sailors living aboard ship when in home port,” he said. “We’re currently evaluating options designed to ultimately provide

the opportunity for sailors to live ashore when in home port.”

Air Force’s Finch said the most important concerns voiced by single and married airmen involve the need for safe, adequate and affordable housing. “To give you an example of what our housing needs are, about 40 percent of our families live on base, with approximately 30,000 families waiting for quarters around the Air Force,” he said.

Finch, too, said he wishes Congress would extend privatization authority so the service can continue to attack the problem.

He said the Air Force is currently 14,000 dormitory rooms short of the 75,000 it needs for single airmen. The service is working on a program that has eliminated all permanent party “central latrine” dorms. He said the service will continue the renovation regime to “replace or renovate our worst dormitories by fiscal 2009.”

The Marine Corps’ McMichael said he, too, is concerned about the quality of life for his younger service members. He said the Corps must renovate bachelor quarters and barracks and called on Congress to provide the funds to renovate or replace 7,896 sub-standard bachelor housing spaces.

Beyond that, McMichael told the committee, more than 60 percent of the Marines’ fiscal 2001 military construction request would go to replacing “inadequate and deteriorating infrastructure. Many of your Marines work in undersized and inefficient workspaces that do not have proper climate control, utilities or fire protection.”

Other areas the top NCOs covered included:

- Child care — Hall and Herdt addressed the services’ need for child care. Hall spoke of the Army’s building a single management structure for youth. Herdt said all the services need more infant and toddler care.

- Fitness centers — Finch quoted an Air Force survey showing that junior enlisted members believe base fitness centers are “the most important base-level service offered.”

- Building military communities — McMichael said building communities is more than just putting up or renovating houses and includes providing facilities all other Americans have such as community centers, ball fields, picnic areas, bus shelters and bicycle and jogging paths.

“Our vision for housing ensures a consistent level of quality is provided in all our neighborhoods,” he said. The services recruit members, but retain families, the NCOs said unanimously. All stressed quality of life as a means to enhance readiness.

April designated as month of the military child

courtesy of MCCS

MCAS Miramar

As children of service members, military children grow up in diverse locations; often leaving extended families (grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins) and friends behind. They move frequently, live in foreign countries that other children have never heard of, often stick close to other military children, and share a special closeness to their immediate family. For all this uniqueness however, children are children and safety takes top priority.

Keeping children safe from poisons:

- Keep all non-prescription and prescription medications in locked cabinets and return to safe storage immediately after use.
- Use only child-resistant covers on medications.
- Know the names of the plants in your yard and where your child plays.
- Keep gardening and spring cleanup products in their original containers, labels attached and out of reach of children.
- If poisoning happens, call the local poison control center, before following the first aid instructions printed on the product container. Keep Ipecac Syrup on hand, but use only when recommended by a trained health-care professional.

Keep children safe in the kitchen:

- Put pans on rear burners.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove.
- Place hot dishes at the back of the counter.
- Keep hot foods away from the table edge.
- Keep appliance cords out of reach.
- Only use table cloths and place mats when small children aren't around.

Keep children safe from drowning:

- Never leave your child alone in the bathtub, swimming pool, around fountains, 5-gallon buckets of water or any other water containers.
- If boating, place a personal flotation device (PFD) on your child. Also it's a good idea if camping with a small child, to put them in a (PFD) when close to a river or lake.

Keep children safe in vehicles:

- The back seat is generally the safest place in the car for all children 12 years of age or younger. Never put a rear-facing infant seat in the front when there's a passenger air bag.

Safety seats:

- Rear-facing infant seats are designed for babies — birth until at least 20 pounds and one year of age.
- Convertible safety seats “convert” from rear-facing to forward-facing for toddlers between one and four years of age, who weigh between 20 and 40 pounds. (If a child is under four years of age or over four years of age but under 40 pounds, the driver, parent or legal guardian, must put the child in an approved safety seat.)
- Use a booster seat as a transition to safety belts for older children who have outgrown their convertible seat but are not quite ready for the vehicle's belt system.

- Usually children over 80 pounds and eight years old can fit correctly in lap/shoulder belts.

We've only touched the tip of the iceberg for helping to keep children safe. Children are quick— mishaps occur in an instant. Even when you think your child couldn't possibly do “whatever”— they can. Take all necessary safety steps, this is no place for short cuts.

Please be safe, look out for each other and we'll talk again next week!

It's Spring Carnival!

Saturday is Spring Carnival Day! Join your friends and neighbors for free rides, games, food, entertainment and photos with the Easter Bunny — it's for military and DoD family members ages two to 12!

Showtime is 10 a.m., with live, on-stage entertainment, rides and games. Mr. and Mrs. Easter Bunny will arrive shortly after, and will walk around greeting guests. Kids will enjoy free hot dogs, chips, cookies and

punch. At 1:30 p.m., there will be drawings for Easter baskets. It's all happening at the Youth Sports Complex, across from the Base Theater. Look for the bright pink flyer, or call 577-6365 for details on rides and performances.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

MCAS Miramar is teaming up to keep kids safe “at home and in our community.”

Sgt. Maj. Corner,

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some violent behavior between the two of them in the past. In short, several warning signs were there that everything might not be as it should be in their family and those kids might be not be cared for as well as they should be. I told the servicemember that while I understood his explanations, I would recommend that the command investigate the allegations. If everything he said was true, that would come out in the wash. However, if the allegations were in fact true, it was my responsibility and the command's to act in the interests of the children.

Man, did he blow his top! I thought we were going to throw hands right in my office. “How dare you interfere with my family? You have no right! I will get a lawyer.” To be frank, it was not a very good scene, and it only got worse. Later that night, I got a call from the wife swearing me upside and down about how I had no business listening to the reports. She said I was a poor excuse for a sergeant major for not sticking up for her husband instead of pursuing the investigation. “How dare I?”

Well, to tell you the truth, by this point, I was having second thoughts about the course of action I had chosen. Was I doing the right thing? Was I overstepping my authority? I was not sure. But one thing I was sure of, was if those kids were being abused, I was in a position to protect them, and I had better do what I thought was right even if it did cause me to be very unpopular with the parents.

Look for important messages on signs and marquees. The Base Library will feature books, bibliographies and posters to help heighten awareness.

An informative video, “Don't Shake a Baby,” will be shown by the Midwifery Clinic and at various locations. April 20, family home daycare providers will receive a two-hour presentation on stress management and shaken baby syndrome.

Look for child-abuse prevention and healthy parenting information in the *Flight Jacket*, and for handouts throughout the month.

Family Fun Run

In honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month, there's a free Family Fun Run/Walk at 9:30 a.m. Saturday starting at Moore Avenue, near the Commissary parking lot. Bring the family to run (or walk, or stroll, or hop, jog or skip) the one-mile course. Finishers will receive a ribbon and a water bottle. It's sponsored by MCCS Counseling Center, MCCS Semper Fit and MWSS-373. Call 577-4129 for more information. (Don't forget: It's followed by the Spring Carnival, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Youth Sports Complex!)

April is Month of the Military Child

There's a whole lot of action planned for this special month. The Base Theater will host live, on-stage entertainment at 1:30 p.m. on Thursdays, followed by a children's movie. Upcoming events include Bubble Mania Thursday, Professor Bonehead (April 20) and Tropical Topics (April 27). Call 577-6365 for details.

To make a long story short, the kids were being abused and so was the spouse as it turns out. The father was a drunk that abused the children on a regular basis.

That was the basis for their arguments and the heavy drinking between the two of them at the club and other functions they were observed at. It had been going on for several years and without the command stepping in, the whole story could have had a really tragic ending. I would like to be able to tell you that after the command stepped in, the husband got counseling made peace with his wife and kids, and lived happily ever after, but that would only happen in a perfect world. There is no happy ending to this story.

The service member was forced to attend some mandatory anger management classes and he went to Level Three alcohol abuse treatment, the whole time, swearing everybody upside down for trying to screw him and his career. The marriage was broken. They were soon transferred to another state and, as I found out later, they soon divorced. Not a great ending to the story, huh?

On the positive side, the kids, who are the innocents in these cases, stopped being beaten and abuse. The last report I got was that they are now living with the mother who quit drinking and are hopefully doing better than they were before.

What's the point of my story?

The point is really quite simple. In most child neglect and abuse cases, there are warn-

See **Sgt. Maj. Corner**, Page 11

New Parent Support Program Offers Ideas

Miramar's New Parent Support Program and the Children's Hospital of San Diego have come up with 30 different ways for you and your child to see April. Among them are studying clouds; what do you see in the sky? April 16, rent a kid's video. Pick up the “Month of the Military Child” flyer, or call 577-9812.

Children's Storytime

Designed for preschoolers and ages five and up, but open to extended family, friends, and neighbors, too, MCCS Library Weekly Storytime presents a mix of timeless and new stories, plus songs, finger plays, flannel board activities and a craft. It happens every Monday at 10 a.m. Sessions generally last from 45 minutes to an hour. The Library is in Building 5305. For more information, call 577-1261.

Free MCCS Movies

•**Today:** *Boiler Room (R), 6:30 p.m.; Eye of the Beholder (R), 8:45 p.m.*

•**Saturday - Sunday:**
Alcohol-free weekend movie marathon
Gun Shy (R), 11:30 p.m.; The Talented Mr. Ripley (R), 1:30 a.m.; The Beach (R), 4 a.m.

•**Sunday:** *Toy Story 2 (G), 2 p.m.; The Tigger Movie (G), 3:45 p.m.; Hanging Up (PG-13), 6:30 p.m.; Down to You (PG-13), 8:30 p.m.*

For more information, call 577-4143

USS Tarawa,
continued from page 1

the first squadron on the West Coast to receive and deploy with the newly remanufactured jets. The remanufactured jets ... are definitely our strongest players.”

In addition to the landing practice, during the return trip to San Diego, two Harriers from VMA-211 ran attack profiles against the ARG, and gave the Black Sheep realistic scenario’s to practice their emergency defense tactics, said Wilkin. Coordinating the ship’s radar and Harrier radars VMA-214 intercepted VMA-211 and was able to simulate weapons employment.

“Our APG-65 Radar gave us a distinct advantage on this mission,” said Wilkin. According to Wilkin, the skills and qualifications picked up during the short trip will prove to be invaluable for the 31st and 13th Marine Expeditionary Units when they deploy this summer. “This short trip is unique, but it offers a great opportunity to work as a squadron prior to us splitting up.”

DFAS,
continued from page 1
1-877-363-3677.

In addition to PINS, DFAS officials said the new system is made secure by requiring all customers to use web browsers that conduct transmissions using 128-bit encryption and Secure Socket Layer technology.

This means that anyone accessing the E/MSS must have one of the following industry-standard browsers: Netscape Navigator

version 3.0, 4.01 or higher, Microsoft Internet Explorer version 4.0 or higher, or Netscape Communicator.

DFAS officials said service members should look for even more E/MSS capabilities in the near future. While the system is currently only available to active-duty Marines and most civilian employees, it will soon be available to all DFAS patrons. Additionally, more features will soon be available through the E/MSS, including the ability to start and stop bond allotments, change state tax information, view Leave and Earning Statements and others.

More information about the E/MSS and other services provided by DFAS can be found at www.dfas.mil.

WDM,
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silver badges and eight points toward distinguished.

The remaining one-half are awarded bronze medals and six points towards distinguished. Four Marine Corps division competitions are fired annually. The Far East matches are fired in Okinawa Japan; Pacific matches, fired in Hawaii; Eastern Division matches, fired at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Competitors who medal in either weapon at division matches are entitled to the privilege of competing in the Marine Corps Championships.

The Marine Corps Championships are being held on the West Coast for the first time in 38 years, according to Chief War-

rant Officer 3 Phillip E. Rucks, Headquarters, Marine Corps representative for WDM. Of the three Miramar Marines, only Dewey and Lawson advance. Schulz received a waiver from competition in order to meet other obligations. Dewey and Lawson agreed that the competition experience has caused them to improve their discipline in applying the marksmanship fundamentals. They both said they hope to do well at the MCM, noting that they are competing against their fellow Marines. In particular, they are now competing with the top 10 percent of shooters in the Corps.

Rucks said a number of the Marines competing in the MCM will be selected to continue to represent the Marine Corps at the Inter-service Championships and at national matches, as a member of the Marine Corps Shooting Teams.

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ing signs that something is wrong. Most people tend to ignore those warning signs at first, just as I did, wanting to believe nothing is wrong.

But let me tell you something – if you don’t get involved, who will? We as Marines and Sailors pride ourselves as being the protectors of the weak and oppressed, don’t we? Let me ask you this, who do you know that is more defenseless than a child?

If you are a peer, friend, shipmate or leader, you have a moral and ethical responsibility. If you think something is amiss or a

child is in danger, report your suspicions to the proper authorities.

If there is nothing going on, you have a clear conscience. If some small child is being abused, you just might be saving his or her life.

The act of creating life is really a simple thing to do. It requires no maturity on either part of the participants. Raising, nurturing and loving a child, however, require some of the greatest attributes known to mankind. Sometimes when two people understand the physical aspect of creating life but have little knowledge of the raising and caring for that life, bad things can happen.

That is where we as fellow Marines and Sailors need to step in and make sure nothing bad happens to those kids and that the parents get the counseling they need to help them deal with the pressures of parenthood.

If you are abusing a child, or know someone who is, get help or get them help. If you have a suspicion that someone is harming a child, trust your instincts and tell someone. Tell the chaplain, tell your first sergeant or the military police, but please tell someone. ... Please.

Tiny white coffins are not something any of us should ever be responsible for. Think about it.

Semper Fi

**MAKE TRACKS TO
OUR WEBSITE AT:**
www.miramar.usmc.mil